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INTERNAL SECURITY AND GENERAL CONDITIONS WITH IN ALBANIA

1. At first glance the preponderance of Army, Sigurimi, Policija, Brigada Nojokes, frontier guards, Communist informers, and gendarmerie will seem overwhelming. But, upon closer study, the cracks in the curtain, the fears of the regime, and the shaky loyalty of the security machine itself will bare itself to you and your task. And Hoxha's rule will not be so formidable.

2. The Army will be your least concern, although it numbers some 60,000 men with Tirane headquarters division and regimental headquarters and units mostly in the direction of the frontiers and particularly spearheaded toward the Yugoslav border. It has a military mission, is armed with Russian weapons, trained to be a component of the Russian Army under Russian officers, is composed of regular soldiers and conscripts whose uniform will be recognized as olive drab jacket and breeches, cap with a red star on the front, small replica of the Army and Unit attached to the collar, puttees or heavy stockings.

3. The Sigurimi is the principal division of the Ministrija e Puneve te Mbrendeshme. Its full title is Drejtorija e Sigurimi te Shtetit. Its function, primarily intelligence, is to conduct internal and foreign espionage, spread propaganda, ferret out plots against the regime, interrogate captors, prepare their cases for trial. In brief, to eliminate so-called "Fascist elements". The officers and men have been drawn mostly from the Army and all are members of the Communist Party. Their adherence to the party line is assured - at least ostensibly - by daily school work, fiery lectures, and the shadow of a spy system within the Sigurimi. To satisfy any curiosity, the offices of the Sigurimi are located in the Ministry of Interior, a three-storey concrete building (with basement) on the New Albania Boulevard in Tirane. Mehmet Shehu, of course, is the Minister. There is close to 10,000 agents of the Sigurimi in Albania: informants, policemen, Army agents, and weak people who would gain favor. No agent has the power of arrest (Note: this is well to know); he must ask, not demand or order, the regular police to make any arrest for him. Like the old NKVD and the later editions of the Russian secret police, the Sigurimi is insidious and may be anywhere. Its chief duty is to keep the local people, the police, and the Army in close control. Next, it is an intelligence organization.

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4. The "Policija", formerly known as the "Mbretja Popullit" is charged with maintaining order and collecting internal intelligence - especially as both concern resistance groups in Albania. They are organized into prefectures (such as Tirane and Korca), sub-prefectures (such as Pequin and Billisht), Lokalitets (such as Martanesh and Dusnar) and villages (such as Vertop). Only strategic villages or villages considered to be "reactionary", that is anti-Hoxha, have regular police assigned for duty. Where none are assigned, the head of the Soviet or Keshulle appoints local citizens as constables. They must serve in this capacity two months every year and are selected from a roster which the chairmen of the Keshulle maintains. Members of this council usually are tested Communists and number from 3 to 15 men, depending upon the size of the town. The chairman selects his compulsory police group on the basis of fitness, arms each man with an Italian carbine (usually) and 18 rounds of ammunition, and, in addition, appoints an official spy in the village to keep suspects under surveillance. The use of informers is widespread.

Many join the Regular Police to (1) avoid military conscription, and (2) receive better pay. Police pay is 2500 to 3000 leks per month as compared with the 100 to 120 leks given to soldiers. Also, they receive special rations of food such as rice and macaroni. It can be seen readily that here is an opportunity for defection; the loyalty given to the regime is questionable throughout the organization. For example, since the formation of the National Committee for Free Albania, old police terrorism has relaxed noticeably for fear of future retaliation; many are awaiting to turn against their officers. This unsure foundation has made it necessary to refuse arms to all but the most trusted police and, of course, active Communist party members. In case of any emergency, all party adherents can be called out and given automatic weapons from police headquarters' arsenals. Here, in this case, is the procedure followed: On the detection of the existence of a resistance band, all party members, including women, are mobilized. The local police then is called in, and finally the Special Pursuit Detachments (Detashments Ndjekes) are summoned. (Note: here the order of priority, and how the party members, as first to be notified, are in position to control). When an armed band is located, some of the combined forces scour the countryside to flush the resistors - others remain stationary, in hiding, hoping to nab the intruders as they emerge for food and water. These stationary patrols are frequently the most dangerous.

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In theory, the police carry automatics or rifles of any make (German, Italian, Russian, or Greek); generally the weapon is a 1914 model Italian musket. Automatics usually are kept in sub-prefecture headquarters. Police conscripts are weaponless. All Communists, whether police or store clerks, are armed (carry pistols - retain rifles or machine guns in their homes). Usual composition of a police post is one warrant-officer and 7-8 men; this figure fluctuates upward as reinforcements may be required; hence, the organization is relatively flexible. A large commune such as Kardhiq has as many as 40 police. (Note to Instructor: Refer to the attached overlay for police distribution, frontier posts, road blocks, and control posts - such as we have available.)

As for the position of the Policija in the scheme of Albanian security, all security forces - with the possible exception of the Sigurimi and the frontier guards, are merged in the Policija. The regular uniforms in summer are Italian blue-gray with rank shown by the Italian insignia system; in winter the color is black and breeches (as opposed to slacks) are worn. Village police, who are largely disloyal, wear red arm bands and para-military caps with civilian clothes.

5. The Mbrojta e Popullit Division, which falls to the Army, is responsible for the security of Albania's frontiers. The frontier area is considered 3 kilometers from the actual border. Each platoon of 30 men is responsible for an assigned zone and it is patrolled in 3's, 200 to 300 metres from the border. Men are selected for this Division on the basis of marksmanship and are armed with German rifles, any machine guns (German, Italian, British), and Russian hand grenades. (The rest of the Army is equipped with Russian rifles, MG's and mortars.)

Passes to enter the restricted Frontier Zone are obtainable from unit headquarters of the Peoples' Defense Division; soldiers in uniform in the zone are not questioned. Uniforms of this division are similar to British battle dress, are of thin material, and were made in Czechoslovakia. Boots worn by the troops are good and heavy. It is not known whether families have been evicted from this sensitive zone, but it is extremely doubtful that they have. Inhabitants are known to move about freely inside the 3-kilometer depth. Land mines, for example, have been removed from the border fronting Greece.

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(Road controls and Frontier Posts appear on the enclosed overlay.) Generally, frontier posts are installed in all villages adjacent to or within the border-patrol area. Other control posts are stationed at - or nearby - all bridges, strategic spots on the roads, and at important trail junctions. These isolated guard stations consist of one NCO and 6-7 men (some reports list as high as 30, but these may have been confused with Policija units; other reports state the number of Post-Bloks and men are greatly exaggerated).

6. Despite this elaborate system of checks, or so it would appear, there is no regular control exercised over travellers. Only out and out suspects are stopped. You can qualify as a suspect simply by asking indiscreet questions, stupid questions, or questions on military information. This unthinking manner of conduct liables you to imprisonment or worse as it would any present-day citizen of Albania. Only a Leter Njoftim, which costs 12 leks, is necessary to possess and show whenever contested. Every citizen must have one, and inability to produce one is punished by instant imprisonment. To move from one place to another suspect persons must obtain permission to travel from the local council - which merely gives, or refuses permission, and makes a note of it. No document is issued.

The Leter Njoftim is supposedly valid indefinitely. One granted in any town is recognized anywhere else. Workmen should carry a union card; Communists, a party card, but these are never demanded. The Leter Njoftim is the magic document, and even it is rarely inspected. From it, for example, passenger lists on busses are compiled, which indicates a relative ease of movement although one mode perhaps not to be encouraged.

7. All letters are censored but it is not known whether they are tested for secret inks. Mail and telegrams can go anywhere except to Yugoslavia and Greece.

8. There is no curfew in the villages but it is inadvisable to go out after midnight, which is the curfew hour in the larger towns (in some 2000 to 0600; Tirane enforces no such ruling).

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9. Besides the touchy frontier zone, all military encampments are restricted; the harbor at Durres is forbidden territory. In Tirane a hand-picked unit called the "Special Guard of the Popular Albanian Democracy", which consists of 200-300 men, protects the Ministry of National Defense, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and a residential section called "New Tirane" where ministers and generals live in peaceful refuge. Special permission is required to enter this retreat.

10. This has been a review of the foremost forces of Albanian security. It's loopholes, largely a result of unsympathetic response on behalf of the lesser individuals within the system, loom as opportunities for your mission. Some of the cautions we have presented may not have any real basis by now or are so weakened by disloyalty that their threats are ineffective. Teams have operated successfully before, are operating now, and will operate more efficiently in the future. Of that the Committee - and we - are certain.

It may seem that we have glossed over the subject. We point out that this has been a general study. At a future briefing you will be told the whereabouts of each police installation, road block, Pursuit Brigade, Army headquarters - all with numbers of officers and men, equipment, state of morale, names of ardent Communists, and likely defectors. The final briefing will be for your specific area of operation so that you will know as much as can be learned of your region, including reliable contacts to begin the resistance organization.

11. What about general living conditions? Life is difficult. Ration cards which must be purchased are practically worthless - nothing listed on the card is available. Barter is the best way to obtain food. This ugly situation is worse in the cities and large towns where food cannot be readily grown. Conversely, the farmland population is apt to have more food.

The following articles are rationed: bread, sugar, oil, soap, fish, meat, macaroni, flour.

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Cards are issued as follows:

Red for heavy workers
Blue workers and functionaries
Green plain working population
Biege children

The daily bread ration is 800 grams for heavy workers, 600 for workers and functionaries, 400 for plain working population, and 200 for children. Heavy workers receive as a monthly ration 600 grams of sugar, 600 grams of oil, 300 of soap, 2 kilos of meat or fish, and 2 kilos of macaroni or flour. Ordinary workers and functionaries receive half of that; the remainder of the population and the children one-third of that.

There are no restaurants in Albania, with the exception of the State-run "Diatl" restaurant in Tirane. This is operated for the Diplomatic Corps and official guests, neither of which you quite qualify.

It appears that, like many of your compatriots, you will be reduced to bartering and buying on the Black Market. We are taking that into consideration in our plans.

Albania, today, is not overflowing with milk and honey and there is little left of the "Pie in the Sky".

Miscellaneous

1. The Russians are increasing their control of the Albanian Army as a result of the abortive revolt of the artillery brigade at Elbasan on December 24, 1949.

2. In large organizations, i.e. Policija (about 20% loyal to the government) and Army, where it is impossible to have exclusive Communist membership, party men usually fill key officer slots. Here will be found the the seeds of discord against the officers, the party, and the Hoxha government. Discordant, they are candidates to join your cause.

3. As opposed to the above, the Special Pursuit organization (which has been experiencing failure at large recruiting) is 100% Communist. Its headquarters are in Tirane, but the working detachments are mobile and operate wherever diversionists are reported or resistance breaks out.

4. In the People's Defense Division, southern Albanians were posted in the North, and vice versa. Headquarters: Tirane.

5. All frontier posts are interconnected with telephone service.

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ADDENDUM

1. Information on the following is useful as the basis of operational intelligence.

a. Prices of commodities, tickets for travel, staple goods, etc.

b. Taxes levied and method of collection.

c. Traffic in gold.

d. Valuation of the Lek? Gold? Dollar?

e. Samples of paper currency - all denominations, 10, 20, 50, 100.

f. What U.S. dollar bills are negotiable? How much flows into the country? (Note: the regime is concentrating on collecting dollars from relatives and friends abroad).

g. Location of control points and road blocks.

h. Extent of Special Pursuit Brigade activities. Any improvement in the recruiting of members (Note: heretofore, much difficulty had been experienced in the recruitment; loyalty standards were most rigorous)?

i. Samples of ration cards.

j. Indications of increased discontent with the regime. It is significant to note that dissatisfaction is apparent throughout the country, but the lack of leadership permits this opportunity to remain useless. This adds further to our emphasis on the extreme value of organizations

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